



# Boston City Council

## Committee on Government Operations

Maureen Feeney, *Chair*

May 18, 2010

Dear Councillors:

The Committee on Government Operations held a hearing to discuss Docket #0655, An order for a special law to grant volumetric easements in the Boston Common. This matter was sponsored by Mayor Thomas M. Menino, referred to this Committee on Wednesday, May 5, 2010 and heard at a public hearing on Thursday, May 13, 2010 at which public comment was taken.

The special law is subject to Article 97 – A transfer between the city of Boston and the MBTA. A few years ago, there was a settlement agreement to make major improvements of accessibility that included signage and other issues. Five stations were identified as handicap accessible with elevators, but other challenges made them less usable.

This matter is related to the Park Street MBTA stop. While it may be technically accessible, it remains very difficult for patrons to use. Customer currently use an elevator to cross Tremont Street, go down a level, cross the tracks, then maneuver down towards tunnel and use another elevator to access services. The proposed plan is to build a new elevator to provide direct access to the green line.

The Conservation Commission unanimously granted approval of the project on March 24, 2010, and the Parks and Recreation Department unanimously granted approval on March 29, 2010.

After first determining a site location, the MBTA worked with the Boston Parks and Landmarks Commission and the BRA on the design, including the glass materials architecture. The design specifications meet the MBTA needs. The glass must be transparent for safety reasons and is consistent with historic structures on the Common. The design was approved by the Landmarks Commission. The MBTA also completed an environmental review and impact assessment. Article 97 ensures that there is no net loss of park space as a result of this project. In working with the Parks Department, the MBTA will provide improvements to the Boston Common, including new pavement and new treatments.

In regards to a work schedule, the total project will run 23 months, with most construction taking place from 9:00 PM to 4:00 AM to prevent disruptions. The proposed staging area will be larger than the final structure that will be constructed.

By the Chair of the Committee on Government Operations, to which the following was referred:

**Docket #0655: An order for a special law to grant volumetric easements in the Boston Common**

based on information presented at the hearing and public comment gathered by the Committee and having considered the same, respectfully recommends that this matter ought to pass.

Maureen Feeney, *Chair*  
Committee on Government Operations